

No. R-506. House concurrent resolution in memory of Vermont Chief Justice Honorable Albert Wilkins Barney, Jr.

(H.C.R.370)

Offered by: House Committee on Judiciary

Offered by: Senate Committee on Judiciary

Whereas, Chief Justice Albert Barney, a St. Johnsbury native, was one of this state's most illustrious jurists who distinguished himself on the bench and as a member of the bar, and

Whereas, Albert Barney was a graduate of Yale University, interrupted his education to serve honorably in the United States Navy during World War II, and then resumed his scholarly pursuits at Harvard Law School from which he earned his law degree in 1948, and

Whereas, just three years after graduating from law school, his judicial career began at the St. Johnsbury Municipal Court, and

Whereas, Judge Albert Barney impressed the members of the bar, and within a year, the general assembly elected him as a judge of the superior court where he sat until March 1959, when his outstanding record on the bench resulted in the legislature's elevating him to the bench of the Vermont Supreme Court, and

Whereas, for the next 15 years, Associate Justice Albert Barney continuously earned the respect of his colleagues and of legal practitioners who argued their appeals before the state's high court, and

Whereas, from 1961 to 1974, Justice Albert Barney chaired the Vermont Statutory Revision Commission, successfully guiding the implementation of a new annual updating of the state's codified law known as the Vermont Statutes Annotated, and

Whereas, in 1974, Justice Albert W. Barney was promoted to the state's highest judicial office when he became Chief Justice of the Vermont Supreme Court just as the voters were approving a constitutional amendment creating a unified court system, and he strove mightily to implement this mandate, and

Whereas, Chief Justice Albert Barney proved an innovative judicial leader who convened the first citizen's conference on the Vermont courts, and

Whereas, he was known for writing judicial opinions with clarity and conciseness, and

Whereas, Chief Justice Albert Barney was a national leader among state jurists, an active member of the American Academy of Judicial Education, Chair of the Conference of Chief Justices, and the recipient of the Award of Merit from the American Judges Association, and

Whereas, although Chief Justice Albert Barney officially concluded his career on the bench in 1982, retirement was not a term with which he can be associated as the Chief served as a retired justice for many years, and he was still occasionally sitting on the bench until approximately four years ago, and

Whereas, his life off the bench was active and varied as he loved to read, hunt, fish, work in his garden, and of course root for the Red Sox which he did from his home this past Sunday evening, and

Whereas, Chief Justice Albert Barney's effort to create a truly unified court system came to fruition on May 8, 2010, when the general assembly approved the 2010 court reorganization bill, just two days before his death on May 10, in St. Johnsbury at the age of 89, and

Whereas, his wife Helen, daughters Marianne, Joan, and Kathleen, eight grandchildren, and one great-grandchild, have lost a loving husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, and the state of Vermont a true leader of the judiciary, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly expresses its most sincere condolences to the family of Chief Justice Honorable Albert W. Barney, Jr. and recognizes his enduring contribution to the rule of law in Vermont, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Helen Barney and to Albert Barney's daughters.